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JUL 10 2006

Serial No. 10/017,927

OKI.469

Amendment dated July 10, 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 4 have been amended.

Finality of Current Office Action

The current Office Action dated February 9, 2006 has been made final, whereby the Examiner has asserted that Applicant's Amendment dated November 28, 2005, necessitated the new grounds of rejection. Applicant respectfully traverses the finality of the current Office Action for the following reasons.

In the previous Office Action dated July 26, 2005, claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by the Luther reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,555,343). **Claims 4-8 were not rejected based upon prior art.** Claims 1 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph in the previous Office Action dated July 26, 2005. However, claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph only to the extent that "the symbol character column interval" and "the character line" lacked sufficient antecedent basis.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Amendment dated November 28, 2005, did not necessitate the new prior art grounds of rejection of claims 4-8, because claim 4 was amended merely to improve antecedent in view of the concerns raised by the Examiner and to improve readability. Claim 4 was not amended to substantively change scope to further distinguish over cited prior art. This should be understood

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given that claim 4 was not previously rejected based upon prior art, and was thus presumed to distinguish over the cited prior art.

Accordingly, since Applicant's Amendment did not necessitate the new prior art grounds of rejection of claims 4-8, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the finality of the current Office Action dated February 9, 2006, and to enter the corresponding claim amendments as presented herewith of record as a matter of right. In the event that the finality of the current Office Action dated February 9, 2006 is maintained, the Examiner is respectfully requested to establish on the record clear and sufficient reasons why.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1-6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. This rejection, insofar as it may pertain to the presently pending claims, is traversed for the following reasons.

The voice synthesis apparatus of claim 1 includes in combination a first detection module "that detects a paragraph section line having a recurrent string pattern in a character column of one line, wherein the recurrent string pattern comprises a plurality of strings each including a plurality of kinds of symbols"; and a voice synthesis module "for performing voice synthesis for a rest of the character column, after deleting the paragraph section line from the character column".

As described beginning on page 1, line 24 of the Substitute Specification with

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respect to Fig. 8, a character column is input to preprocessor 802 (102 in Fig. 1), and the character column understandably includes a plurality of sequential characters including text, symbols and punctuation. As described beginning on page 2, line 24 of the Substitute Specification, the use of continuously repeated symbols such as a series of hyphens are conventionally used as a paragraph section line indicative of the start of a paragraph. As described on page 3 of the Substitute Specification, in addition to a simple description such as a line of asterisks or hyphens, paragraph section lines may be indicated by various descriptions as shown in Table 1 on page 4 of the Substitute Specification.

As should be understood in view of Table 1 on page 4 of the Substitute Specification, a paragraph section line which occurs at the beginning of a character column may include a recurrent string pattern that comprises a plurality of strings, each of the strings including a plurality of kinds of symbols. Although not to be necessarily considered as limiting, example no. 9 in Table 1 shows a paragraph section line having a recurrent string pattern, wherein each string includes five characters consisting of one black square symbol and four white square symbols.

Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill would readily understand the scope of claim 1 as noted above. As set forth in Manual of Patent Examining Procedure section 2173.02, definiteness of claim language must be analyzed, not in a vacuum, but in light of the content of the particular application disclosure; the teachings of the prior art; and claim interpretation that would be given one of ordinary skill. As

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further set forth, some latitude in the manner of expression and the aptness of terms should be permitted. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3 are in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and thus respectfully urges the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

Claim 4 has been amended to feature in combination a first detection module "that detects symmetrical patterns of symbol characters respectively at a beginning and an end of a character column of one line". Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill would readily understand the scope of claim 4. Applicant also respectfully submits that claims 4-8 are in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and thus respectfully urges the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by the Yamada reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,411,931). This rejection, insofar as it may pertain to the presently pending claims, is traversed for the following reasons.

The Examiner has alleged that the Yamada reference discloses the features of claim 1 as described in column 5, line 24 through to column 8, line 19, with particular attention directed to elements 21 and 22 in Fig. 3. Applicant respectfully disagrees for the following reasons.

As specifically described beginning in column 5, line 35 of the Yamada reference with respect to Fig. 3, for character data that is electronic mail, the no conversion

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indicator data may include a "group of character data 21 representing address information carried in the front end of the electronic mail and another group of character data 22 representing sender information held in the rear end of the electronic mail". The no conversion indicator data may also include punctuation marks such as periods, commas, questions marks, and exclamation marks. The no conversion indicator data is entered by a system user using external input unit 8 as shown in Fig. 1, and is displayed on display 9 as shown in Fig. 2.

The Yamada reference as relied upon by the Examiner does not disclose a first detection module "that detects a paragraph section line having a recurrent string pattern in a character column of one line, wherein the recurrent string pattern comprises a plurality of strings each including a plurality of kind of symbols", as featured in claim 1. The apparatus of the Yamada reference as noted above merely detects no conversion indicator data such as address information and sender information located in specific areas of an electronic email, and does not specifically detect a paragraph section line. The Yamada reference in particular does not even describe or consider a paragraph section line, and thus clearly fails to detect a paragraph section line having a recurrent string pattern comprising a plurality of strings each including a plurality of kinds of symbols as featured in claim 1. The apparatus of the Yamada reference consequently does not perform voice synthesis for a rest of a character column, after deleting a detected paragraph section line from a character column, as further featured in claim 1. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the voice synthesis apparatus of claim 1

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distinguishes over the Yamada reference as relied upon by the Examiner, and that this rejection, insofar as it may pertain to claims 1-3, is improper for at least these reasons.

With respect to claim 4, the Examiner has essentially relied upon the same reasons as given with respect to the rejection of claim 1. However, as noted above, the no conversion indicator data as described beginning in column 5, line 35 of the Yamada reference may include a group of character data 21 representing address information carried in the front end of electronic mail, and another group of character data 22 representing sender information held in the rear end of electronic mail. The no conversion indicator data may also include punctuation marks such as a comma, a period, a question mark or an exclamation mark.

The Yamada reference as relied upon by the Examiner does not specifically describe a detection model "that detects symmetrical patterns of symbol characters respectively at a beginning and an end of a character column of one line", as would be necessary to meet the features of claim 4. Consequently, the Yamada reference does not disclose a voice synthesis module that deletes from a character column symbol character column intervals that have been detected as symmetrical patterns, and does not thereafter perform voice synthesis for a rest of the character column, as would be necessary to meet the further features of claim 4. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that the voice synthesis apparatus of claim 4 distinguishes over the Yamada reference as relied upon by the Examiner, and that this rejection, insofar as it may pertain to claims 4-6, is improper for at least these reasons.

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Conclusion

The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the finality of the current Office Action dated February 9, 2006, for the reasons as set forth above. The Examiner is also respectfully requested to enter the above noted amendments as a matter of right.

Furthermore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the corresponding rejections, and to pass the claims of the present application to issue, for at least the above reasons.

In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, please contact Andrew J. Telesz, Jr. (Reg. No. 33,581) at (571) 283-0720 in the Washington, D.C. area, to discuss these matters.

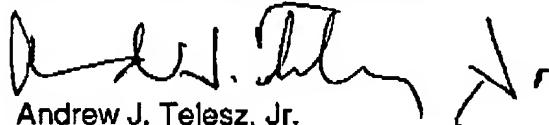
Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. 1.17 and 1.136(a), the Applicant hereby petitions for an extension of two (2) months to July 9, 2006, for the period in which to file a response to the outstanding Office Action. The required fee of \$450.00 should be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment for any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 50-0238.

Respectfully submitted,

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